

Ahmedabad pays tributes to martyrs of Hindu-Muslim unity

Leading citizens of [Ahmedabad](#) Tuesday paid rich tributes to Vasant and Rajab who sacrificed their lives for communal harmony 62 years ago.

A memorial programme, organised by the Movement for Democracy (MSD) and other organisations, was attended by mayor Kanaji Thakor, deputy mayor Kalpanaben Bhatt and civic officials. A number of activists from NGOs like Sanchetna, Aapnu Mandal, Rashtriya Seva Dal, Drishti Media, and St. Xaviers Social Centre also participated.

MSD convenor Prakash N. Shah recalled the supreme sacrifice of Vasantrao Hegishte and Rajab Ali Lakhani who on July 1, 1946 - a rath yatra day - were killed by a mob during communal skirmishes.

'These martyrs are to be remembered as icons of struggle for justice, equality and socialism. The responsibility of fulfilling their unfulfilled dreams is to be carried by us, the present generation,' he said.

Shah recalled Ahmedabad was up in flames that day and Vasant and Rajab were engaged in saving Hindu and Muslim families and their houses and properties throughout that day.

They rescued a Muslim driver from a rioting Hindu mob and a Hindu owner of a washing company from a Muslim mob.

When they reached Khand-ni-Sheri in Jamalpur area to save a Dalit family, the mob threatened to kill them but they did not budge and lied down on the road to prevent the rioters from going ahead.

The fanatics killed Vasant and Rajab but spared the Dalit family.

The pair of a Hindu and a Muslim became martyrs and an icon of communal harmony, Shah said.

A street play on communal harmony, 'Kem, kyan sudhi' (Why, to what extent), was also staged by activists of Drishti Media on the occasion.

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